



Borough of Bury St. Edmunds

ANNUAL REPORT

OF THE

Medical Officer of Health

1961.

BURY ST. EDMUNDS

F. G. PAWSEY AND CO. LTD., HATTER STREET,

PRINTERS.

THE WORSHIPFUL THE MAYOR
ALDERMEN AND COUNCILLORS
OF THE BOROUGH OF BURY ST. EDMUNDS

MR. MAYOR, LADIES AND GENTLEMEN,

I have the honour to present the Annual Report of the Public Health Service for the year 1961.

The main features of the vital statistics were a small reduction in the estimated population, and increases in the birth rate and in the death rate, but the number of infant deaths was markedly reduced.

The very large increase in the number of cases of infectious diseases notified during the year was mainly due to an extensive epidemic of measles.

Good progress has been made in the modernisation of food shops and with the provision of hygienic equipment and improved storage facilities at these premises.

Poultry inspection is becoming an increasingly important daily duty of your meat inspectors because of the great increase in the number of birds killed for human consumption.

Efforts to secure the repair and improvement of sub-standard houses were maintained throughout the year and further progress was made with the Council's slum clearance programme.

My thanks are due to all the members of the Public Health Department and especially to Mr. E. H. Box your Chief Public Health Inspector, for his loyal support at all times and for his help in the compilation of this report.

Finally I should like to thank the Chairman and Members of the Public Health Committee for their continued interest and encouragement.

I have the honour to be,

Your obedient servant,

P. COGGIN BROWN,

Medical Officer of Health.

An Example of Saving Old Property



Unfit Houses closed by the Council.



Under reconstruction by the new owners.



The work completed.

Public Health Officers of the Authority

MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH

P. Coggin Brown, M.R.C.S., L.R.C.P., D.P.H.

CHIEF PUBLIC HEALTH INSPECTOR

E. H. Box, M.A.P.H.I.

ADDITIONAL PUBLIC HEALTH INSPECTORS

J. Ellis, M.A.P.H.I.

G. Harrison, M.A.P.H.I.

CLERK

Miss A. Wright

VITAL STATISTICS.

ALL FIGURES IN BRACKETS, which follow in the sequence of this report, relate to the corresponding figures for 1960.

Registrar General's Estimate for 1961	21,760 (21,920)
Census April 1961	..... 21,144
Rateable Value	..... £304,651
Sum Represented by a Penny Rate (Est.)	£1,275
Area	..... 3,623 acres

POPULATION:—The Registrar General's estimate of the population shows a reduction of 160.

BIRTHS:—There was a sharp rise in the birth rate reversing the downward trend which had been apparent throughout the previous 3 years, and the figure when corrected for comparability, equalled that for England and Wales as a whole.

LIVE BIRTHS	Total	Male	Female
Legitimate	364 (326)	177 (177)	187 (149)
Illegitimate	10 (11)	4 (8)	6 (3)
Crude Birth Rate, per 1,000 of population		17.2	(15.4)
Birth Rate per 1,000 corrected for comparability		17.4	(15.5)
„ „ per 1,000 of population England and Wales		17.4	(17.1)

STILLBIRTHS	Total	Male	Female
Legitimate	5 (7)	1 (2)	4 (5)
Illegitimate	— (—)	— (—)	— (—)
Stillbirth rate per 1,000 total (live and still) births	13.2		(20.3)
„ „ „ „ „ „ „ „			
England and Wales		18.7	(19.7)

DEATHS:—There was a marked rise in the death rate from the previous year's figure which was the lowest ever recorded in Bury St. Edmunds. However, the corrected rate of 10.6 per 1,000 of the population compares very favourably with the rate for England and Wales and with that for the Boroughs and Urban Districts of West Suffolk.

In comparison with the previous year more deaths occurred from respiratory diseases and more from diseases of the heart and circulatory system. Nine deaths occurred from accidental causes, only one of which was due to a motor vehicle accident.

CANCER OF THE LUNG:—There is now a massive weight of evidence showing that heavy cigarette smoking is an important factor in the causation of this disease, and it is well known that the number of deaths from lung cancer is increasing throughout the country. Study of the death returns for Bury St. Edmunds shows that last year out of every 24 deaths from all causes 1 was due to lung cancer, and that the number of deaths from this disease was more than double the average for the previous 10 years. I believe that action now will prevent some deaths which would otherwise occur from lung cancer in years to come. Those of us who have not already stopped cigarette smoking should do so now, those who cannot stop should try to reduce the number of cigarettes they smoke, and all of us should use our best endeavours to dissuade young people from starting the habit.

DEATHS:—	Total	Male	Female
	258 (203)	126 (94)	132 (109)
Crude Death Rate per 1,000 of population			11.9 (9.3)
Death Rate per 1,000 of population corrected for comparability			10.6 (8.1)
Death Rate per 1,000 of population England and Wales			12.0 (11.5)

INFANT MORTALITY:—There was a welcome reduction in the infant mortality rate. The actual number of infant deaths was reduced from 9 to 5, but it is to be expected that the infant mortality rate will vary widely from year to year because the figure is based upon a relatively small number of births. Prematurity caused most of the infant deaths, 4 of which occurred in the first week of life.

Deaths of Infants under 1 year of age—

	Total	Male	Female
Legitimate	5 (7)	3 (5)	2 (2)
Illegitimate	— (2)	— (2)	— (—)
Infant Mortality Rate per 1,000 live births			13.4 (26.7)
Infant Mortality Rate per 1,000 live births England and Wales			21.4 (21.7)

CAUSES OF DEATHS DURING THE YEAR 1961
IN BURY ST. EDMUNDS.

					Registrar General's Figures.	
					M.	F.
ALL CAUSES	....	....	....	....	126 (94)	132(109)
1	Tuberculosis, respiratory	....	....	....	— ( —)	1 (—)
2	Tuberculosis, other	....	....	....	— ( —)	— ( —)
3	Syphilitic disease	....	....	....	— ( —)	— ( —)
4	Diphtheria	....	....	....	— ( —)	— ( —)
5	Whooping Cough	....	....	....	— ( —)	— ( —)
6	Meningococcal infections	....	....	....	— ( —)	— ( —)
7	Acute poliomyelitis	....	....	....	— ( —)	— ( —)
8	Measles	....	....	....	1 (—)	— (—)
9	Other infective and parasitic diseases				1 (1)	— (—)
10	Malignant neoplasm, stomach	....			5 (3)	1 (1)
11	Malignant neoplasm, lung, bronchus				8 (5)	3 (—)
12	Malignant neoplasm, breast	....			— ( —)	5 (4)
13	Malignant neoplasm, uterus	....			— ( —)	3 (4)
14	Other malignant and lymphatic neoplasms				9 (9)	9 (12)
15	Leukaemia, aleukaemia	....	....		1 (1)	1 (1)
16	Diabetes	....	....	....	1 (—)	4 (—)
17	Vascular lesions of nervous system				26 (12)	28 (21)
18	Coronary disease, angina	....	....		38 (22)	23 (24)
19	Hypertension with heart disease	....			— ( 1)	4 (—)
20	Other heart disease	....	....	....	3 (8)	9 (14)
21	Other circulatory disease	....	....		3 (5)	6 (2)
22	Influenza	....	....	....	1 (—)	2 (—)
23	Pneumonia	....	....	....	5 (4)	16 (11)
24	Bronchitis	....	....	....	10 (5)	2 (1)
25	Other diseases of respiratory system				1 (1)	— (—)
26	Ulcer of stomach and duodenum	....			( 3)	1 (—)
27	Gastritis, enteritis and diarrhoea	....			1 (—)	— (—)
28	Nephritis and nephrosis	....	....		2 (—)	— (1)
29	Hyperplasia of prostate	....	....		— ( 1)	— (—)
30	Pregnancy, childbirth, abortion	....			— ( —)	— ( —)
31	Congenital malformations	....	....		— ( 2)	— (—)
32	Other defined and ill-defined diseases				7 (7)	8 (9)
33	Motor vehicle accidents	....	....		1 (2)	— (—)
34	All other accidents	....	....	....	2 (1)	6 (2)
35	Suicide	....	....	....	— ( 1)	— (2)
36	Homicide and operations of war	....			— ( —)	— ( —)

INFECTIOUS DISEASES.

The large increase in the total number of cases of infectious diseases notified during the year was mainly due to an extensive epidemic of measles.

MEASLES:—A wide-spread epidemic accounted for the notification of 634 cases. Half of the patients were children of school age and more than half the cases were notified in the month of May. One death was recorded as due to this disease but the child concerned had other very serious disabilities.

WHOOPING COUGH:—More cases were reported than in the previous year but no death occurred from this disease.

INFECTIVE HEPATITIS:—Seven cases were notified and in most of the patients the disease was mild in character.

FOOD POISONING:—Four cases of food poisoning occurred in one family outbreak. The investigation of this incident showed no pathogenic bacterial contamination of food samples or in specimens from the patients, but metallic poisoning by copper was suspected. It was not possible to confirm that the illness was due to copper because of the very small amount of material available for testing, namely the washings from an “empty” tin of baked beans which was recovered from the dustbin. Tests were made by the Public Analyst on 3 further tins of beans of the same brand, with the same batch number and bought from the same shop, but although each of these tins contained copper it was present in quite insignificant amounts.

TUBERCULOSIS:—Nine (3) new cases, including one case of non-pulmonary tuberculosis, were notified during the year.

PULMONARY TUBERCULOSIS

Age and Sex distribution of new cases, 1961

Age	0	1	5	10	15	20	25	35	45	55	65+	Total
Male	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	1	1	—	2	4
Female	—	—	—	—	—	1	—	—	1	1	1	4

(other than Tuberculosis).

8

MONTHLY INCIDENCE OF NOTIFIABLE DISEASES.
(other than Tuberculosis).

Disease	Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May	Jun.	Jul.	Aug.	Sept.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.	Totals
Measles ..	3	57	55	68	378	67	4	1	1	—	—	—	634
Whooping Cough	—	—	—	11	13	25	3	1	—	1	—	1	55
Infective Hepatitis	—	1	—	2	2	1	—	—	1	—	—	—	7
Scarlet Fever ..	—	—	1	1	—	1	2	—	—	—	—	—	5
Pneumonia ..	—	2	—	—	—	—	—	1	—	—	1	—	4
Food Poisoning ..	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	4	—	4
Puerperal Pyrexia ..	—	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	1

SANITARY CIRCUMSTANCES OF THE AREA.

WATER:—Routine sampling of private water supplies was continued, and samples from two private supplies showed contamination. However, after steps had been taken to rectify the defects found, satisfactory reports were received for every supply.

There are approximately 120 houses within the Borough receiving their water supplies by means of standpipes. Twenty houses are on private well supplies, and all the others have an internal water supply from the town mains.

SWIMMING BATHS:—The water for the Council's public swimming bath is taken from the town mains supply and is treated at the bath by chlorination and filtration, the change over period being approximately $8\frac{1}{2}$ hours. Samples of the water were sent for bacteriological examination at regular intervals throughout the summer and all were satisfactory. Samples were also examined of water from two private swimming pools. One of these pools, belonging to a school, had satisfactory reports throughout the summer but samples from the other private swimming pool were unsatisfactory.

The following is the report of the Borough Surveyor and Water Engineer:—

WATER

GENERAL.

The supply of water to all parts of the Borough has continued to be adequate and wholesome. Consumption during the year amounted to 389 million gallons, an increase of 10 million gallons over the previous year.

ANALYSIS

One hundred samples of treated water taken from consumers' taps and twenty-seven samples of untreated raw water direct from the boreholes were analysed during the year and the results indicated that the usual high standard of purity was being maintained.

NEW SUPPLIES

In order to make piped water available to new housing estates, water mains were extended in several parts of the town and a new 9" feeder main was provided in Westley Road.

EDUCATION

Parties of school children have visited the Waterworks during the year and various students have been given information on water supply matters to enable them to compile reports for their examinations.

REFUSE DISPOSAL

Controlled tipping at the Haberden and burning on a reduced scale at the refuse destructor was continued throughout the year, but by the end of December the available area for tipping at the Haberden was almost exhausted. Tipping there will cease completely early in 1962 and burning at the refuse destructor will gradually come to an end. Controlled tipping at West Stow Sewage Farm is to be commenced early in 1962.

SWIMMING POOL

The pool was used regularly throughout the season, but attendances were only moderate except during the hot spell in late June.

SEWERAGE AND SEWAGE DISPOSAL

The new sewage disposal works at Fornham Park was virtually completed by the end of the year and the first flow of sewage was treated there early in December. It is expected that the amount of sewage diverted to Fornham Park will gradually increase so that it is likely that all the sewage from the Borough will be treated at this modern works by mid 1962.

The construction of the new outfall sewer from the town to Fornham Park was commenced early in 1961 and was about one third completed by the end of the year, when, unfortunately due to difficulties with the Contractor, work was held up temporarily. It is expected that work will be recommenced in 1962.

INSPECTION AND SUPERVISION OF FOOD

During the past year there has been good progress with the modernisation of certain food shops and with the provision of new equipment, and, in the case of several other shops, plans for further improvements have been passed. It is gratifying to note this progress for it shows that the maxim "hygiene pays" has been proved. Further evidence of better hygiene in food handling is provided by the fact that it has not been necessary to institute legal proceedings regarding any contraventions of the Food Hygiene Regulations for three years. However it would be wrong to be complacent about food hygiene generally. A lot still remains to be done. The staff of such premises are constantly changing and it is essential that new entrants to this important industry should receive proper training so that they are aware of their responsibilities. With this object in view a number of lectures were given by the officers of this Department.

It is, of course, important that the same care and attention is given to food when it reaches the home which it has received throughout its manufacture and sale. In this connection the careful storage of perishable foods in a cool well ventilated larder or a properly used refrigerator cannot be over emphasised. Unfortunately large numbers of houses within the Borough lack such facilities but it is pleasing to note that the Public Health Act, 1961 has at last given power to Local Authorities to require the provision of a ventilated food store.

During the year your officers were invited by the West Suffolk Hospital Management Committee to make initial and periodic inspections and report upon all the kitchens and food premises in the town controlled by the Hospital Group. This has been done, and a spirit of co-operation and goodwill has developed between the officers concerned. It is hoped also that arrangements can be made to hold short courses of instruction in food hygiene for newcomers to this work and other food handlers who may wish to attend.

MILK:—Seventy-four samples of pasteurised milk from Bury St. Edmunds were submitted to the Public Health Laboratory at Cambridge by the Chief Inspector of Weights & Measures of the West Suffolk County Council and, in order to avoid duplication of work, copies of the laboratory reports relating to these samples were made available to this department. Two of these samples failed to pass the Methylene Blue Reduction Test.

Nineteen samples of raw milk were submitted by members of this department for examination by biological methods. No evidence of Tuberculosis was detected but two were found to be infected with *Brucella abortus*. This was reported to the Divisional Veterinary Officer of the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries & Food and to the Medical Officer of Health of the district where the milk was produced.

ICE CREAM:—Fifty-six premises were registered for the storage and sale of ice cream. In addition to 11 inspections at these premises 76 (75) samples of ice cream were sent to the Public Health Laboratory for examination by the Methylene Blue Reduction Test, 68 of which were classified in provisional grade I, 7 in grade II and 1 in grade III. The latter was believed to be due to faulty manufacture.

SLAUGHTERHOUSES:—At the end of the year slaughtering ceased in one of the old slaughterhouses so that work could commence on the construction of new premises. Alternative temporary arrangements were made for the animals to be slaughtered elsewhere. It is hoped that one new slaughterhouse will be in operation before the end of 1962.

MEAT INSPECTION:—The total number of animals killed for human consumption was 14,080 – the lowest number killed in the Borough for six years. Until the new slaughterhouses are constructed it is expected that this number will fluctuate over the next few years.

	Total number of animals killed for human consumption			
1952	11,641
1953	11,552
1954	12,301
1955	14,298
1956	14,396
1957	14,997
1958	16,227
1959	16,280
1960	15,177
1961	14,080

It is gratifying to note that the percentage of tubercular infection in cattle (excluding cows) has dropped from 6.3% in 1954 to .2% in 1961 and, for the first time no Tuberculosis was detected in cows. Further evidence of the general improvement in animal health is provided by the fact that the proportion of cattle livers condemned from all other causes has fallen from 22% in 1954 to 10.8% in 1961.

POULTRY:—Your meat inspectors continued to make daily visits to premises where poultry is killed and dressed, and 6,548 birds with a total weight of more than 11 tons were condemned as unfit for human consumption. Although this was an increase over the previous year the figure represents only a fraction of 1% of the birds killed.

AVIAN TUBERCULOSIS:—The department co-operated in a research project conducted by a Medical Officer of the Ipswich & East Suffolk Chest Service concerning the sensitivity to Avian tuberculosis of adult workers who handle live and dead poultry. Our thanks are due to the management and staff of three local poultry processing establishments who volunteered to be tested with Human, Bovine and Avian tuberculin. It is expected that the results of this investigation, which were of a reassuring nature, will be published in due course.

Carcases and offal inspected and condemned in whole or part.

	Cattle excluding Cows.	Cows.	Calves.	Sheep	Pigs.	Horses.
Number killed (if known)	2747	221	77	6268	4767	—
Number inspected	2747	221	77	6268	4767	—
ALL DISEASES EXCEPT TUBERCULOSIS AND CYSTICERCI						
Whole carcases condemned	7	2	2	14	21	—
Carcases of which some part or organ was condemned	303	65	2	262	623	—
Percentage of the number inspected affected with disease other than Tuberculosis and Cysticerci	11.3	30.3	5.2	4.4	13.5	—
TUBERCULOSIS ONLY.						
Whole carcases condemned	—	—	—	—	1	—
Carcases of which some part or organ was condemned	5	—	—	—	106	—
Percentage of the number inspected affected with Tuberculosis ....	.2	—	—	—	2.2	—
CYSTICERCI						
Carcases of which some part or organ was condemned	56*	—	—	—	—	—
Carcases submitted to treatment by refrigeration	55	—	—	—	—	—
Generalised and totally condemned	—	—	—	—	—	—

C. Bovis 2% of total cattle inspected. * 1 beast affected with C. Bovis totally condemned for other causes.

ANALYSIS OF CONDEMNED

Cattle

	Whole Carcases	Heads & Tongues	Lungs	Livers & Pt. Livers	Skirts	Hearts	Whole Carcases	Heads
Tuberculosis		2	3					
Pneumonia Pericarditis Pleurisy, Peritonitis Melanosis and Emphysema	1		19			2		
Pyæmia, Pyrexia Gangrene, Septicaemia	2						1	
Liver Fluke, Cirrhosis and other Parasitic conditions			8	125				
Nephritis, Necrosis Degeneration and Contamination, C. Angioma				48	1			
Emaciation and Oedema	4						6	
Actinomycosis and Actinobacillosis		7						
Tumours, Abscesses Cystic conditions, Adhesions and Odour	1	9	7	148	7			
Toxaemia								
C. Bovis		37			3	17		
Icterus and Uraemia	1						3	
Swine Erysipelas								
Moribund, Bruising, etc.							4	
TOTALS	9	55	37	321	11	19	14	

The following Carcase Meat was also condemned :—

					BEEF
Bruising, Atrophy, or Decomposition	.....	.....			437 lb.
Abscesses	.....	.....	.....	.....	8 lb.
Arthritis	.....	.....	.....	.....	— lb.

The total weight of all meat condemned in the

MEAT AND OFFAL.

Sheep					Pigs				Calves			
Lungs	Livers	Hearts	Whole Carcases	Heads	Lungs	Livers	Hearts	Kidneys	Whole Carcases	Heads	Livers	Lungs
			1	104								
83		39	6		364		81					2
			8									
84	62				19	99		1				
	4					3		1				
			1									
	4		2	3	2	12		6				
									2			
			2									
			2									
167	70	39	22	107	385	114	81	8	2			2

MUTTON
 4 lb.
 —
 —

PORK
 456 lb.
 264 lb.
 303 lb.

VEAL
 —
 —
 —

slaughterhouses was 7 tons. 15 cwts. 3 qrs. 27 lbs.

FOOD PREMISES:—The number of food premises in the area classified by type of business, the number of premises registered under Section 16 of the Food and Drugs Act, 1955, and the number of inspections of these premises, which were made during the year, are recorded in the accompanying table.

	Number Registered under Sect. 16 F. & D. Act.	*Total Number of premises.	Number of inspections made.
Butchers and Pork Butchers	18	21	59 (68)
Bakers	—	9	43 (56)
Confectioners	—	34	52 (29)
Fish – Wet	1	4	16 (24)
Fish – Fried	12	10	30 (25)
Greengrocers	—	17	46 (44)
General Provisions	1	61	108 (71)
Hotels	—	10	34 (30)
Licensed Premises (excluding hotels)	}	64	80 (86)
Restaurants, Cafés and Canteens			
Food Stalls	—	32	168 (147)
Other Food Premises	—	22	66 (47)

* These figures should be regarded as approximate because in many cases different businesses are conducted from the same premises.

UN SOUND FOOD:—Foodstuffs found to be unfit for human consumption and diverted to other purposes or destroyed were:—

	Tons	Cwts.	Qrs.	lb.
Cheese		1	—	2
Bacon		1	—	18
Fish		1	3	23
Biscuits		2	2	6
Poultry	11	—	2	17
Fruit		1	3	6
Ham (tinned)		3	3	3
Tinned Meat, 605 tins		17	3	10
Tinned Vegetables, Milk, Fish, Fruit, etc., 2,848 tins	1	10	2	25
Miscellaneous		3	2	1
TOTAL	14	4	3	27
Meat and Offals (at slaughterhouses)	7	15	3	27
TOTAL	22	—	3	26

Number of certificates of condemnation issued 2,320 (2,217).

The methods used for the disposal of unsound food were unchanged.

DISEASES OF ANIMALS ACT, 1950

At the beginning of the year the Borough was included in a Fowl Pest Infected Area. These restrictions were removed on the 14th February.

During the year 5,482 (5,795) swine and poultry movement licences were issued by the department.

ANTHRAX:— The carcase of a heifer which had died on a farm outside the district was brought to an establishment in Bury St. Edmunds where it was dressed for feeding to hounds. The following day it was suspected, and two days later confirmed, that the animal had died from Anthrax. Before the cause of death was known part of the meat had been fed to the hounds, and, unfortunately, in the process of dressing the infected carcase the operator cut his hand. The personnel concerned were kept under medical supervision, and the hounds were attended by a veterinary surgeon. The premises and vehicles were disinfected, the remains of the carcase were burned and the hide was traced to, and destroyed by, a firm of tanners in an adjoining county. No further cases were reported amongst human or animal contacts.

PREVENTION OF DAMAGE BY PESTS ACT, 1949

The number of inspections made by the staff of this department, and of treatments by the Council's operator were as follows:—

PRIVATE DWELLINGS

Inspections	1,860
Treatments	231

BUSINESS AND OTHER PREMISES

Inspections	869
Treatments	110

In addition to the above 2 maintenance treatments were carried out on the sewerage system of the town and periodical inspections and treatments were made at the sewage farm, refuse destructor

FACTORIES ACT. 1937.

Inspections were carried out of premises under the above Act and, as will be seen from the following table, some defects were noted. The majority of these had been remedied by the end of the year and attention was being given to the outstanding matters.

Regular inspection of such premises is most important for, if this is neglected, at some premises the standards tend to become lower.

1.—INSPECTIONS for purposes of provisions as to health (including inspections made by Public Health Inspectors.)

Premises.	Number on Register	Number of		
		Inspections	Written notices	Occupiers prosecuted
(i) Factories in which Sections 1, 2, 3, 4, and 6 are to be enforced by Local Authorities	20	20	3	
(ii) Factories not included in (i) in which Section 7 is enforced by the Local Authority	182	220	7	
(iii) Other premises in which section 7 is enforced by the Local Authority (excluding out-workers' premises)	22	15	1	
Total ..	224	255	11	

2.—Cases in which DEFECTS were found.

Particulars.	Number of cases in which defects were found				Number of cases in which prosecutions were instituted
	Found.	Remedied	Referred To H.M. Inspector.	By H.M. Inspector	
Want of cleanliness (S.1)	7	18			
Overcrowding (S.2)					
Unreasonable temperature (S.3)		1			
Inadequate ventilation (S.4) ...	4	5		1	
Ineffective drainage of floors (S.6)	1	1			
Sanitary Conveniences (S.7)					
(a) Insufficient	2	2			
(b) Unsuitable or defective	13	12		3	
(c) Not separate for sexes					
Other offences against the Act (not including offences relating to Outwork)	2	4			
TOTAL	29	43		4	

OUTWORK.

(Sections 110 and 111).

Nature of Work.	Section 110.			Section 111		
	No. of out-workers in August list required by Sect. 110 (1) (c)	No. of cases of default in sending lists to the Council.	No. of prosecutions for failure to supply lists	No. of instances of work in unwholesome premises.	Notices served.	Prosecutions.
Wearing apparel, Making, etc.	5					
The making of boxes wholly or partially of paper	4					
TOTAL	9					

and refuse tip. There were no major infestations of rodents at any of the Council's properties.

During the summer months numerous complaints were received regarding wasps' nests and 82 nests were destroyed.

HOUSING

The Ministry of Health no longer require details on housing matters to be included in the Annual Reports of Medical Officers of Health, but because so much of your officers' time is devoted to this subject some brief notes are recorded below:—

Building Progress. New housing accommodation provided during 1961 was as follows:—

LOCAL AUTHORITY	Under construction on
Completed in 1961	31st December, 1961
66	86

It should be noted that of the 86 houses under construction 77 were for town development purposes.

PRIVATE ENTERPRISE	Under construction on
Completed in 1961	31st December, 1961
81	65

IMPROVEMENT OF LOCAL AUTHORITY HOUSES:—Work in connection with the modernisation of the Council's pre-war houses was continued and a further 85 houses were completed in 1961.

OVERCROWDING:—Four cases of statutory overcrowding were abated but a further 3 houses were known to be overcrowded at the end of the year .

SLUM CLEARANCE:—Progress has continued to be satisfactory in this important work and it is pleasing to report that since 1955, when the Council embarked upon their present programme, 267 unfit houses have been demolished and a further 237 have had closing or demolition orders placed upon them or have been included in clearance areas. In the year 1961 58 houses were demolished.

Seventy families were displaced from sub-standard houses in 1961 – of these families 59 were re-housed by the Local Authority.

In this connection the Housing Manager has reported that "It is also extremely refreshing from my point of view to talk to so many of these people who so urgently desire to move from the poor conditions under which they live despite increased rent and travelling required." Members of this department have also found this to be the case, and it is pleasing to have our experiences confirmed. We all look forward to the day when reasonable housing conditions will exist throughout the Borough thus making such comments unnecessary.

HOUSING REPAIRS:—Another important duty of this department is the encouragement of repairs and improvements to houses which can be made fit for human habitation and modernised. In this connection it is gratifying to report that 327 unfit or defective houses were repaired during 1961 as a result of the formal or informal action of your officers. The following list shows details of the work completed :—

Roofs repaired	.....	.....	.....	.....	137
Guttering and rainwater down pipes repaired or renewed	.....	.....	.....	.....	86
External walls repaired or repointed	.....	.....	.....	.....	103
Doors repaired or renewed	.....	.....	.....	.....	69
Chimneys, flues and fireplaces repaired	.....	.....	.....	.....	67
Floors repaired or renewed	.....	.....	.....	.....	86
Windows repaired or enlarged, etc.	.....	.....	.....	.....	143
Dampness remedied	.....	.....	.....	.....	154
Wall and ceiling plaster repaired	.....	.....	.....	.....	86
Stairs and staircases repaired	.....	.....	.....	.....	32
Food stores provided	.....	.....	.....	.....	26
Internal water supplies provided	.....	.....	.....	.....	6
Sinks provided or renewed	.....	.....	.....	.....	11
Water closets repaired	.....	.....	.....	.....	36
Additional water closets provided	.....	.....	.....	.....	9
Drainage – repairs and improvements	.....	.....	.....	.....	89
External decoration	.....	.....	.....	.....	10
Yard pavements repaired	.....	.....	.....	.....	6
Dry Rot remedied	.....	.....	.....	.....	24
Miscellaneous	.....	.....	.....	.....	40
TOTAL					1,220

DUSTBINS:—At the end of the year 984 (853) bins had been provided under the Council's dustbin scheme.

COMPLAINTS:—During the year 1,003 (965) complaints were received in the department about various matters, all of which were investigated and appropriate action taken where necessary.

INSPECTIONS

1.	Houses — defects and nuisances	663	(634)
2.	Houses — Survey and Housing Acts	1818	(1878)
3.	Housing Act — (Improvement Grants)	232	(292)
4.	Houses — re-visits	1164	(1222)
5.	Rent Act	12	(29)
6.	Verminous or insanitary houses	41	(79)
7.	Visits in connection with verminous persons	16	(14)
8.	Drainage work	340	(446)
9.	Public Health Act — Section 75	58	(75)
10.	Common Lodging Houses	—	(12)
11.	Clean Air Act	50	(62)
12.	Infectious Diseases enquiries	34	(107)
13.	Shops Act	166	(110)
14.	Interviews with owners, etc.	619	(514)
15.	Noise Abatement Act.	43	(—)
16.	Slaughterhouses.....	815	(875)
17.	Poultry inspection	929	(1185)
18.	Stables and piggeries	14	(9)
19.	Diseases of Animals Act	110	(210)
20.	Agriculture (Safety, Health and Welfare Provisions) Act, 1956	13	(18)
21.	Pets Act	10	(5)
22.	Schools	18	(15)
23.	Petrol installations	212	(167)
24.	Explosives stores	72	(68)
25.	Caravans	202	(154)
26.	Outworkers	8	(27)
27.	Ponds, pools and ditches	50	(55)
28.	Rag, Flock and Other Fillings Act, 1951	2	(6)
29.	Destructor and tips	30	(57)
30.	Unsound Food	177	(178)
31.	Hairdressers and barbers	38	(17)
32.	Game Act	4	(18)
33.	Offices	11	(9)
34.	Miscellaneous	160	(152)
TOTAL		8131	(8846)

